

The Safety of a True Christian.

BEING THE
 SUBSTANCE
 OF A
 DISCOURSE

Deliver'd in LONDON,

In the YEAR 1744.

By *J O H N C E N N I C K.*

Who hath sealed us, and given us the Earnest of his Spirit, 2 COR. i. 22.

The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, Ps. xxv. 14.

L O N D O N:

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The History of a True Christian

BEING THE

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In the Year 1744

JOHN CANNICK

Printed and sold by the Author, at the Sign of the

Three Kings of the Fish, in the Strand, near the

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E Z E K. ix. 6.

Come not near any Man upon whom is the Mark.

THESE Words are a Part of the Charge which GOD gave to the destroying Angels whom the Prophet, in a Vision, saw standing in the LORD's Prefence, each with his destroying Weapon in his Hand, and who were waiting at his Word to slay without Mercy all but such as were distinguished by a hidden or secret Character, called in the Text *the Mark*. Ezekiel relates the Manner of the sealing some to be saved, and the Order to slay utterly all the Rest, with an uncommon and striking Solemnity. *He sings of Mercy and Judgment, of the Goodness and Severity of God* before the whole rebellious House of Israel; nor was the Vision intended for their Sakes only, to whom at that Time the Oracles of God were sent, but the Whole, like the most of the other inspired Writings, concerns the Race of Mankind in general, and particularly those who are called by the Lord's Name.

It was undoubtedly sent to warn Men of an approaching Day, wherein all who have satisfied themselves without the Power of Godliness, the one

Thing needful, shou'd weep and wail bitterly, and be cut off and destroyed from among the People of God; and to inspire all who are any ways disposed to be saved, to make their Election sure, and to get their Interest and Part secured in the Book of Life; as well as to shew forth their safe and happy Condition who are sealed to the Day of Redemption, and who have obtained of God our Saviour the Witness of his Spirit, that they are the Children of God.

The Blessings as well as Curses made to the *Israelites* under the Law have been observed chiefly to relate to Things temporal, but then they were Shadows of eternal Things, and of which now the Gospel treats plainly and without a Veil. Hence we may innocently conclude, that how far soever this Vision might relate to the Overthrow and Rejection of the *Jews*, on Account of their Unbelief, Idolatry, and perverse Behaviour, yet it certainly had Respect to a Time of greater Desolation than that of cutting off the *Israelites*, or dispersing and scattering them among the Nations: For St. *John*, in his Book of *Revelations*, mentions of the Things which shall come to pass in the last Day, in much the same Manner as in this Part of *Ezekiel's* Prophecy.

He saw that some Angels, who had Power to hurt the Earth and the Sea, &c. were charged not to do it till the *Servants of God* were sealed in their *Foreheads*, and then to hurt and torment such who had not received that Seal. Thus *Ezekiel* says, *There stood a Man by the brazen Altar, clothed in white Linen, with a Writer's Inkborn by his Side, who was appointed to set a Mark on all that were*
Mourners

Mourners in *Israel*, and who sigh'd because of the Abominations of *Jerusalem*; and when he had done this, then the other Angels, who had destroying Weapons in their Hands, were commanded *to go out after him and spare not, neither shew Pity, but kill utterly Old and Young, Women, Maids and little Children, and to begin at the Lord's Sanctuary, but at the same Time they were ordered, Come not near any Man on whom is the Mark.*

The Person clothed in white Linen is, no doubt, *our Saviour*; for in this Way he is described by all those who have seen him in his Glory. His Inkhorn is his pierced Side, out of which he seals and marks his Inheritance who are in the World. When he had said with a loud Voice on the Cross, *It is finished!* then were all his People ransomed, and the whole World retrieved and saved out of the Enemy's Hand; but after *Jesus* was dead, a Soldier pierced his Side, that out of his Heart's most precious and costly Blood he might sprinkle them, and mark them as a Shepherd marks his Sheep. This also is promised to all those who overcome, *I will write upon thee the Name of my God, and I will write upon thee my new Name.* This is in other Places called, *the Secret of the Lord*, and this Appellation is given it by *Job*, *David* and *Solomon*. It is also called, *that new Name which no Man knoweth saving him that receiveth it.* It is the *Mark of the Lamb in their Foreheads*, the divine Frontlet which the Bishop of *our Souls* bestows on all who are invited to the Marriage-Supper. In other Parts of Scripture the *Holy Ghost* calls it a *Jewel put on the Forehead*. In short, it is no other than *our Saviour's* giving to the Soul the Seal and Earnest
of

of his Spirit, whereby he makes himself known to them as he does not to the World, and in which they rejoice with Joy unspeakable, knowing that nothing shall separate them from his Love, or rend them out of his Hands. They have received the Image and Mark of Jesus, the Name of God is upon them, the Engraving whereof is like the Engraving of a Signet, which none can read, or blot out, or efface, but he only who is the Lord of Hosts, and who has loved them with everlasting Love, which is only known to the Lamb and themselves who have received it.

This is the One Thing, which so many, with all their splendid Shew of Christianity, yet lack, and without which it will avail very little to have been called Christians.

The Holy Spirit, who is also a faithful and true Witness, will not suffer any to suppose they are right in the Sight of God till they have received of him the Lord's Badge and Mark. He continually troubles and disturbs the profane and wicked Man with shewing him his spiritual Nakedness, his Crimes and aggravating Sins; and as once he called to Adam in the Garden after his Fall, Adam, where art thou? so he calls the sleepy and unconcerned Part of the World, as if he said to each, Where art thou? In what a State art thou? Knowest thou not, O poor Soul, that thou art still a Servant of Sin and Satan; thou art unconverted; thou art no Christian; thou art an Enemy of Jesus; thy Life, thy Words and Thoughts, thy whole Course is contrary to the Scriptures and true Religion, and also contrary to the Convictions of thy Conscience? Shouldst thou be called

called away in thy *Passions*, or snatched out of the *World* in thy *Drunkenness* or *Whoredoms*, how wouldst thou meet *Death*? how bear the *Judgment* of the last *Day*, or stand at the *Bar* of the *Lord*? Thus secretly does the *Spirit* strive with the *Rebellious*, and seeks with paternal *Tenderness* to win them to *Jesus*. Thus he makes his *Mind* to be felt often when no *Eye* sees it, and in such a *Manner* expostulates with *Souls* that sometimes they tremble, weep and pray; they confess their unsafe *State*, and seem to resolve to alter their *Course* and be converted, but as soon as their old *Company* tempt again, as soon as the next *Morning-light* shines, or as soon as their *Fright* is a little over, they hope they shall neither die or be called to *Judgment* yet, and again take their former *Liberty* of sinning, and with greater *Disobedience* and *Presumption* at last quench the *Holy Spirit* and send him away grieved; but whether he departs or shews forth all *Long-suffering* towards them, he imprints too deep for all *Company*, *Sin*, *Pleasure*, or *Satan* himself to blot it out, that they are in the *Road* to perish, and without that happy *Part* of *Christianity*, the feeling of his *Love*, which all his *Children* have.

Nor are *People* of a self-righteous *Disposition* left to go on comfortably without any *Misgivings* and *Doubts* in *Regard* to their being right: for the same *Holy Spirit* who convinces the *Sinful* of their gross outward *Crimes* and *Offences*, is also continually busied in shewing these that their *Righteousness* is not perfect. It is as if he daily preached to their *Hearts*, *Thou art weighed in the Balances and art found wanting*. He makes them feel how subject they are to the *Fear* of *Death* as well

as others; what natural inbred Sins rise and stir within their Hearts, while they look so well without. How much Self-admiring, spiritual Pride, Hypocrisy and Double-Heartedness mingles with all their Piety and Devotion, how far they are from having a single Eye, how far from being truly low in Heart and full of Faith; how Worldly-minded, how carnal, how dead and cold toward *Jesus*; and when they have carried their religious Acts farther than ordinary, and put all their good Purposes and Vows into Execution, he still whispers, *yet lackest thou one Thing, still one Thing is needful.* This, dying Persons betray to others who stand round their Beds repeating their moral Lives, Duties, Charities and Good Works, trying thereby to persuade them they are safe; they still are uneasy and dissatisfied, they are not yet without secret Fears and Jealousies lest they shou'd miscarry, they are sensible Things are not right with them, they have not *a living Faith in Jesus Christ*, they find somewhat is wanting still; and indeed they think justly, and it is a Pity they shou'd be by any Means cheated, for they want *Truth in the inward Parts*, they want to see *Jesus* is theirs, they want to feel the Redemption, to be sealed, they want *the Mark*. As soon as this is felt within, and the *Spirit* has testified of this to their Hearts, as soon as he has shed abroad *the Love of Christ*, or given them one divine Touch, one View of their Part in *the Blood of the Lamb*, or shew them a reconciled and loving *Jesus*, they can die in Peace, they can sing and think with faithful *Simeon*, *Now Lord let thy Servant depart in Peace, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.*

All People are so far enlightened by *the Sun of Righteousness*, as to see they are not right; and who can, or will afterwards venture on, and not seek to secure to themselves, through *the Assurance of Faith*, their Part in *the Book of Life*, and in the Flock and Fold of *the Good Shepherd*, but stay carelessly without the Door of his Wounds, such must look to be of that unhappy Multitude, of whom Jesus complains, *Ye will not come to me that ye might have Life, I would have healed you but ye would not be healed, I would have gathered you often as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, but ye would not,* and who when the *Messenger of Death* shall call them out of the World, and when they stand with the Small and Great in the last Day, shall fall in the general Slaughter of the Old and Young who have not *the Mark*.

In that Day the having had a Name to live will avail nothing, the Riches of the Rich will cry against him in the Ears of *the Lord of Hosts*, the Wisdom of the Wise will fail him and he will weep bitterly; the strong Man's Knees will smite dreadfully together, and every one's Face gather Paleness, and no Prayer, no Plea, no Excuse, no Cries or Tears will avert one Moment the Blow, or move to Pity the Destroying Angels; they must remove Mercy out of their Eyes and Hands, and slay utterly all who have not known *God*, nor obeyed his righteous Gospel. They have not *the Mark* of the Sheep, and must perish with the Goats. They have not *the Seal of the living God*; *Satan* may seize them: as reprobate Silver, so shall they be refused in the Day of Decision, in the Day when *God* shall try all them that dwell upon the Earth.

SERM. I.

B

When

When *the Lord* was minded to bring his last Plague upon *Egypt*, and to make every House feel his Displeasure at once, he first commanded his own People to sacrifice *the Paschal-Lamb* and sprinkle the Blood of the Lamb upon their Door-Posts, that when the Destroying Angel should pass by at Midnight, he might see *the Mark*, and not enter that House. Accordingly all, who feared the Lord, and hearkened to the Voice of his Minister *Moses*, did so, they made ready a Lamb of the first Year without Blemish, and eat of the Sacrifice in haste, at the same time they sprinkled the Blood upon their Door-Posts and on the Lintels ; and while they were eating their Supper, *the Destroyer* received his Commission, and without any Mercy passed through the whole Land of *Egypt* and slew the Eldest or First-born in every House, so that there was a Cry heard throughout the Land such as never had been known since the World began ; mean while the *Israelites* were all safe in their Houses, they had *the Mark* on their Doors, they had sprinkled the Blood in Faith and were preserved, so that he who smote down the most Reverend and Ancient in every Family, in that Night much to be remembered, did not touch *them*.

Thus is it now : *Jesus* the Chief Priest, and all his Ministers have forewarned us, that *the Angels of his Wrath* stand at his Gates waiting only for the Word, and in one Moment the Four who have Power over the Winds would loose their Hands, and raise the last and final Tempest, the finest Cities would be laid in Ruins instantly, the most magnificent Buildings would be overturned, and not a Stone left upon

upon another which should not be thrown down, the Mountains and Hills would be swept away, and the Sea and its Waves would be roaring every where, while the Pillars of Heaven would be so shaken that the Stars would fall as when a Fig-tree casts its untimely Figs shaken by a great Wind; mean while the Six who stand with their flaming Swords drawn, wou'd smite the Nations and all the *Kindreds of the Earth with an entire slaughter*. This is called in the Prophets, *the Day of Gloominess and Darknes, which shall burn as an Oven, and in which all the Ungodly shall be as Stubble*. But before this Day, *our Saviour* has shewn us how to be saved. All who hear his Voice, like *wise Virgins* get ready, they come in Faith to Himself, *the true Paschal Lamb*, and his Spirit sprinkles on the Door-Posts of the Heart his precious Blood. *We are come*, saith the Apostle, *to the Blood of Sprinkling*. This secures all who have found it, so that let the Judgment hasten on, or linger, they have received *the Mark*; and let it be this Evening or next Midnight, or at Cock crowing, or to-morrow Morning, that *the Angels of Destruction* shall pass through the guilty World, or let all out of the bottomless Pit be unbound to go over the Earth to destroy all thereon, no Harm shall happen to *the Sealed-Ones*, nor shall any Evil come near their Dwellings; a Thousand may fall beside them and ten Thousand at their right Hands, but it shall not come nigh them. No Plague shall cut them off, no Son of Violence shall approach to hurt them, and wherefore? because they obeyed the Voice of *the Lord their God*, and fled to the Sanctuary of the Cross of Jesus, they have their Hearts and Consciences sprinkled with the Blood of the *Lamb*. Their Sins are blotted

out, they have believed and are saved. The *Holy Ghost* has sealed them, and anointed them Kings and Priests to *God and the Lamb*, and they shall stand before the *God of the whole Earth* safely. His new Name who died for them, the Name of the New *Jerusalem*, and the Name of his Father is upon them. If the Blood of a common Lamb sprinkled in Faith on the Doors of the *Hebrews* could so keep off the *Angel* from doing them Harm, and if he could so be deterr'd from hurting them that not one suffered the least Damage, how much more must the Blood of the *Lamb of God* sprinkled on the Heart preserve it against all the Gates and Powers of Hell in Safety for ever. *Satan*, and every Enemy knows, what the Blood of *Jesus* can do; he has already heard the Judge's Charge, *Touch not mine Anointed! Come not near any Man on whom is my Mark.* He has heard the eternal Decree made in their Favour, and trembles before the *Blood of Jesus*, and like *Lightning* flies before it. O People, who art sealed and marked herewith, *Who is like unto thee? Thou art saved of the Lord; the Holy One of Israel is thy Defence, the everlasting God is thy Refuge.*

When *Rahab* was told by the Spies what the *Lord* would do to *Jericho*, and how all therein should die by the Sword, she also was warned to put out of her Window the *Mark* and Sign which was told her, and she did so, she hung out the *Scarlet Thread*, and when the Day came in which at the last blowing of the Rams-horns the *Angels of God* overturned and threw down the Wall of the City, her House stood safe, though it was built upon it. The *Holy Ghost* signifies hereby, as by the Sprinkling of Blood, the same Preservation of those who believe,

believe, and out of whose Window hangs, as it were the *Scarlet Thread*, the *Bond of the Covenant in the Blood of Christ*. Let the Stars fall, let the Skies be roll'd up, and the Heavens pass away with a great Noise and the Firmament melt with fervent Heat, let all God's Thunder-bolts fall and break in Pieces every goodly Thing, and let the Showers of Fire and Brimstone fall and set the whole Universe in a Flame, they shall be safe, as *Rahab* in her House upon the Walls of *Jericho*, they shall be out of Danger, every Thunder-clap, every Storm and Judgment, every Stroke of divine Wrath, and every *destroying Angel* have their Commission, *Come not near any Man on whom is my Mark*. Such shall wait, like Virgins who have Oil in their Lamps, when they shall see the *Lord* descend with ten Thousand of his Saints; they shall wait with inexpressible Longing to see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds, and to hear the Cry, *Behold he comes, the Bridegroom comes, go ye up and meet him in the Air*. O how will they rejoice! how thankful will they be, that once in their Life-time they laid hold on eternal Life, and made their Calling and Election sure by believing unfeignedly on *Jesus Christ*. How will they adore the Riches of his Grace, who prevented them to deceive themselves by resting without the Door of the Fold, by stopping short of the *Mark of the Prize of their High Calling*, or by sleeping like others who are *foolish Virgins without Oil in their Lamps*.

But may I not ask you who are present here, in which Number would you be reckoned, think ye, should the Trumpet now sound? are you of the
blessed

bleſſed Few who are marked? or are you ignorant what it means?

You know in *the Parable of the ten Virgins*, that all of them expected the *Bridegroom*, all were Profeſſors, *all went out to meet him*; and therein conſiſted the Wiſdom of the Wiſe, *they took Oil in their Lamps*, and were ready to meet the *Bridegroom*, let him come when he would; on the other Hand, the Folly of the *Fooliſh* was their Neglect. Setting aſide all the Nations of thoſe who are not named after *Chriſt*, and who make little of his Appearing or ſecond Advent, one Half, if not more, of thoſe who are called by his Name are *fooliſh Virgins*, and take the *Lamp*, have a glorious Profeſſion, *but have no Oil*; they are without eternal Life, without *the Grace that bringeth Salvation*, and ſleep on and take their Reſt as if all was well, they ſlumber and dream of being *Chriſtians*, and think they have made ſome Proſiciency in the true Religion of *Jeſus Chriſt*, when, dear me! they know only his Name, and have no more *the Witneſs of his Spirit that they are his*, and know no more what it is *to be ſealed by him to the Day of Redemption*, than *Turks*, or Children unborn: To ſuch *the Day of the Lord* would be terrible, and for them to hear the Midnight Cry, *Behold the Bridegroom cometh!* would be worſe than to hear the loudeſt Thunders of Mount Sinai, worſe than to have heard the Shrieks and Cries of *Egypt* when their Firſtborn were ſlain! Such would wail becauſe of him, and the Mourning of ſuch at the deſcending of the *Lord* to Judgment would be more and worſe than *the Mourning*

ing in the Valley of Hadadrimmon! O may I in that Day be found worthy to stand before the Son of Man!

What will make *the Day of Judgment* more awful will be the bringing to Light all the secret Sins, the black and horrid Crimes, as well as all the slighting and neglecting Salvation, the hard Thoughts and Words spoken against *the Lamb*, and revealing the hidden Mystery of Iniquity in every Creature; all which might have been done away in the Fountain of the Blood of *Christ*, had not they *made light of it*, and trifled till the Season and *Day of Grace* passed over. Then must the Hypocrites and dry and dead Professors feel first the Sword of the *Destroyer*: *Begin*, says God, *at my Sanctuary*, begin at those who have named my Name, at the Ministers and unfaithful Servants who have rejected the *Corner-Stone*, who have not warned the Souls, but been careless Watchmen, who have rather hushed and lulled to Sleep such as were awaking and beginning to be concerned, persuading them, there is no more necessary than an honest moral Life, and *who have healed the Wound of the Daughter of my People slightly, crying Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace*: and they began at the *honourable Men which are before the House of God*, i. e. they began with the Persons cried up for good Men, and noted and honoured for their Strictness and Devotion, for having done a great Deal, and compassed Sea and Land to make a *Prophete*; but who, after all, were without the *Seal of the Spirit*. In that Day, and not till then, will the Cause be decided between the false and true Professor of *Christ*. Then, however they have
dissembled,

dissembled and made a fine Appearance of Religion, all but inward and pure Christianity will burn up, and leave the *almost Christian* miserable; but as they cheated themselves, and liked to be deceived, they must bear the Loss and Blame, because, in their Life-Time, and in the Day of their Visitation, they did not prize or value the precious Wounds and Blood of *Jesus*, nor hid in the Clefts of that Rock. They slighted him, they lived without him, they loved the World, they chose the Honour of Men, they would not come to our Saviour for Life, they chose their own Way, and ventured on, and must now feel what it is to be *without Christ in the World*.

It will be far otherwise with the *Children of God*, the once despised and reproached, but now honoured and blessed People. As soon as *Jesus* sits on the Clouds, and all the Heavens are opened, and their innumerable Hosts blowing their Trumpets, and harping on Harps to the *Lamb* that was slain, how will they lift up their Heads! the first Smile they get from their dear *Lord* shall more than reward them for all what they have undergone and suffered on his Account in the World; but, *he shall confess them in the Presence of his Father, and before all his holy Angels, These, will he say, are they that have followed me, these continued with me. Come, ye blessed Children of my Father, come up hither.* Those Arms which were once bound to the Cross shall embrace them, and the same Lips once struck by the Officer shall kiss them. *They shall be caught up to meet him, they shall sit down with him on the Throne; and when he shall ascend from his Judgment-Seat, they*

they too shall ascend with him, and enter into the *Wedding-Chamber* before the Door is shut. They shall have a Right to enter by the Gates into the *Holy City*, and to eat of the Fruit of the *Tree of Life* which is in the Midst of the Paradise of God, and shall live for ever with him.

Ah ! don't you wish to be among these *Children of the Bride-Chamber* ? don't you long after this Happiness, and is not *Balaam's Wish* the Desire of your Heart, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my latter End be like his* ? Methinks I hear you say it is. Why then, nothing can hinder you but your own poor bad Self-Will. Ask any Thing of *Jesus*, and he will do it for you. Come to him honestly, and with an upright and sincere Heart, and seek his Salvation, and you shall find it. Be in earnest, for his Name's sake and for your own Soul's sake ; leave all the World, and for this Moment retire out of it, and devote and give up yourselves wholly to follow him, nor satisfy yourself with a self-denying and mortified Behaviour, or with an innocent or strict Life, but look for the *inward Witness, the Seal and Mark* which I have been treating of, and which is on the Hearts and Foreheads of all the *Inheritance of the Lord* ; I mean, get such a Confidence of his Love to you, and such a secret and hidden *Witness of his Spirit with your Spirits that you are Children of God*, and that you are destined by him to be with him for ever, and you will not be ignorant what is *His Mark*, nor will you any more dread Death, or have a fearful looking for of Judgment ; you will sit down at his Feet in Peace, you will sleep and wake happy, live and die to the *Lord*, and saved with

an everlasting Salvation, will be blessed in this World and in the World to come, in Time and in Eternity, and nothing shall be for ever able to pluck you out of his Hands; you will bless yourselves in the *Lord*, and have your Hearts leap for Joy, when you are called hence to be no more seen; for then you will go in Peace to *God your Saviour*: Or should you stay till he comes, you will meet him with eternal Joy and Gladness. To him be Glory and Thanksgiving and Salvation and Praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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